

“A Training Camp for Life”

**26th Annual Governor’s Luncheon for Scouting
Governor Eric J. Holcomb
December 16, 2021**

Remarks as prepared for delivery

Thanks so much, John, and good afternoon, everyone.

Wow! What a setting, and what a turnout!

Now, I understand that my remarks are also being streamed around the state.

For instance, this is Terre Haute’s third year of hosting a satellite location, and the first for Richmond and Muncie.

Welcome to the party, and thank you for joining in!

Whenever I give a prepared speech, my staff provides me with a one-page overview that includes all kinds of information about the event: who’s sponsoring it, the theme, the makeup of the audience, and so forth.

Those of you who do public speaking – you know the drill.

One category on the prep page says: “list of organizations & leaders attending.”

For today’s luncheon, that’s followed by four words: “Too many to name.”

That’s all you need to know about your support for this event – they couldn’t even list all of you, because it would take dozens of pages and there would be hundreds – if not the thousands of names listed.

Your ongoing, enthusiastic support makes this event, once again, the country’s single-largest Governor’s Luncheon for Scouting, that generates more than one million dollars each year!

So, first and foremost, thank you all very much for your incredible investment!

And please also permit me a shout-out to another supporter – Indiana’s First Lady – who is here with us today and has very fond and vivid memories of her time as a Girl Scout.

Now I know I don't have to tell any of you, this is one of the most challenging times of our lifetimes, especially for our youth: a once-in-a-century pandemic, the disruption of much of our lives – including school and work, deep divisions in our country on any number of issues, and the pervasive and persuasive influence of social media, which thrives more on inflaming passions than on fostering reason and bringing people together – the very things on which our democracy depends.

What a perfect time for the Boy Scouts of America and what it stands for.

The Scout brand promise says the following:

One, "Scouting offers boys and girls a fun, adventurous and enriching program that builds young leaders of character."

And two, Scouting teaches our youth to serve, to achieve, and to lead.

CAC's Boy Scouts of America is working to bring out these qualities in more and more young Hoosiers every day: serving a growing number of people of color, and now more than 1,800 girls in Cub Scouts, and more than 700 young women in female-only "Scouts BSA" troops.

If such an organization didn't exist, we'd surely have to invent it.

Now, the theme of last year's luncheon – "A Training Camp for Life" – was so well-chosen that it's back again this year for an encore.

The theme of training and practice has special resonance; none of us would be here if it weren't for training and practice in our given field.

Some would argue Indiana's most famous coach, Bobby Knight, said it all, in perhaps one of his most famous quotes.

He said, "The will to win is not nearly as important as the will to prepare to win. Everyone wants to win but not everyone wants to prepare to win."

Olympic gold-medal gymnast Simone Biles put it this way: *"You make your own luck; you make it in training."*

In motivational videos, Kobe Bryant described waking up at 3:00 A.M. for the first of four daily workouts.

He said, “...As the years go on, the separation you have with competitors and peers gets larger and larger and larger ... and by year five and six, it doesn't matter how much work they do, they can never catch up.”

Our own Peyton Manning – who lit up this stadium more than once, and was the Most Valuable Player a record five times – said he wasn't the greatest athlete, but he would “out-prepare” anyone.

Colts receiver Reggie Wayne once told an interviewer: “*The way Peyton prepared got the rest of us to pick up our game as far as preparation.*”

The interviewer asked Reggie: “*Did he ever get on your nerves?*”

Reggie laughed, and said: “*Every day, man. It was work. He wanted to be the best. It motivated me to be a better player. He did that for all of us.*”

And we all know, training is a decisive factor, well beyond the wide world of sports.

In his book “Outliers” – which was on *The New York Times* bestseller list for 232 weeks – author Malcolm Gladwell set out to find the keys to success for exceptional people, whether athletes or musicians or entrepreneurs.

Many assume the difference must be innate talent or extraordinary intelligence or perhaps education.

But Gladwell discovered what the greats often have in common is what I was just talking about. It's hustle, practice, training, blood, sweat and tears.

Gladwell describes what he calls the 10,000-hour rule.

He says it takes 10,000 hours of intensive practice to achieve the mastery of complex skills and materials – whether it's playing the violin or being as good as Bill Gates or Steve Jobs at computer programming.

One example Gladwell uses is the Beatles – arguably the most influential group in rock history.

In 1960, when the Beatles were just a struggling high school band, they were invited to Hamburg, Germany, where they played eight hours a night, seven nights a week.

Between 1960 and 1962, they did five stints in Hamburg.

After they appeared on the Ed Sullivan Show in February 1964, their fame skyrocketed.

But by then they had performed live more than a thousand times – more than most bands perform in their entire careers.

John Lennon described their time in Hamburg this way.

He said, *“We got better and more confident. We couldn’t help it with all the experience playing all night long.”*

And it’s by no coincidence that training requires several characteristics essential to scouting.

It requires working towards something, a desire to be something, a goal or a vision.

It requires discipline and hard work.

As it says in the Scoutmaster Minute – the essential handbook for Scoutmasters, *“Anything worthwhile in this life requires effort.”*

The handbook also includes the story of a woman who went up to a violinist after his concert and told him, *“I would give half my life to be able to play as well as you do.”*

The violinist replied, *“That is exactly what I have done.”*

Every great talent requires sacrifice and work.

Another thing training requires is persistence – to overcome failure, to fight through the challenges that inevitably come, to pick oneself up, to try again.

Calvin Coolidge, our 30th president, said, *“Nothing in the world can take the place of persistence. Talent will not; nothing is more common than unsuccessful men with talent. Genius will not; unrewarded genius is almost a proverb. Persistence and determination alone are omnipotent.”*

Or as U.S. soccer star Megan Rapinoe said, *“It’s hard to beat somebody that never gives up.”*

The theme of “Training Camp for Life” reminds me of one more important characteristic I’d like to ask our Scouts to think about.

So far, I’ve been talking about individual training.

But a training “camp” is about a team.

It's about building teamwork and collaboration and common effort.

Ultimately, I hope, it's also about friendship.

In research, a longitudinal study is one in which the same group of subjects is observed and measured over time.

One of the longest such studies is the Harvard Study of Adult Development, which in 1938 they began gathering data on 268 Harvard sophomores – including future president John F. Kennedy.

The goal of the study was to find out what factors lead to healthy and happy lives.

Researchers expected that things like cholesterol levels or physical activity would be great predictors of a long and happy life.

They weren't. The biggest key to well-being, the study revealed, is having friends.

The Harvard study might have begun in 1938, but an article that appeared in *Psychology Today* this summer makes the very same point.

It says that human beings appeared to be wired to care about relationships.

It postulates that our ancient ancestors desired to group together for protection and to build families, and are among the reasons that friendships were and are keys to happiness.

COVID has given us a real-life experiment in the dangers of being apart from friends and family.

Zoom and FaceTime may have helped us connect, but they're no substitute for a handshake, a hug, a high five, a doctor's appointment, or just plain hanging out.

Similarly, social media can help us stay connected with friends – but it's no substitute for the deep bonds that come with interaction, teamwork, fun, adventure – all the things at the heart of Scouting.

Recently, I had the pleasure of attending a dinner with the CEO of Qualcomm Cristiano Amon and Nvidia's CEO Jensen Huang, two global thought leaders on where planet Earth will be in ten, twenty years – from using data to determine that answer.

Cristiano talked about a world where “everyone and everything is connected,” as the data clouds hover over all markets.

Jensen spoke on spending a couple billion dollars to create a second Earth, feeding all the data ever collected into a supercomputer, then using AI to predict where every state and nation, ocean, and inch of space would be in 2040 and beyond, bringing new meaning to the intellectual masters of the universe.

So, can we share things online?

For sure, already do – and need to do more of it.

But now, more than ever, the world needs relationships that are not a mile wide and an inch deep, not transient, not virtual, not only found in a chip or semiconductor, but found in the deep bonds forged of time – experiences, teamwork, common goals, shared efforts – those things that only happen when people like Cristiano and Jensen, and an Eagle Scout get together.

For there are some things, including the moral moorings of society itself, that can only happen in the real – not virtual – world, somewhere out there in the omniverse.

So, Boy Scouts of America – and all you supporters of Scouts and scouting – don't just continue your training.

Make training a habit for life.

The more good habits you accumulate, the less time you have tempted by the bad ones!

By the way, each day you get closer to your 10,000 hours, you're one step closer to the mastery of being the best you can be.

And one more favor. Put down your phones every once in a while, not just in the car, but while you're living life.

It could make all the difference in the world.

Before I end, I don't usually use this spot to plug another event, but this old Navy man is delighted to announce that in 2023, the Crossroads of America Council BSA is producing one of the most spectacular examples of teamwork and training you'll ever see, when central Indiana will host the U.S. Navy's own Blue Angels.

Here's a quick look at what we can expect. [VIDEO]

I can't wait! Thank you all very much.

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